

# THE RADICAL.

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JANUARY, 1866.

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## HYMN FOR THE NEW YEAR.

BY J. C. L.

O SOUL, begin thy mighty quest,  
To-day set forth in search of God ;  
The Infinite shall give thee rest,  
The Spirit is thy Staff and Rod.

Yet Soul, not far away He dwells  
Who is thy Promise and thy Stay :  
Within thee, in thy nature's wells  
He showeth clear the Truth and Way.

Not outer Bond but inner Light  
Shall keep thee quick at Duty's call,  
Shall hold thee to Eternal Right,  
Shall lead thee to the All in All.

My Soul, another year comes fleet ;  
Weak wert thou in the race with Time,  
Did not the Spirit wing thy feet  
And bear thee on to heights sublime.

O Soul, acquaint thee with thy needs,  
To-day re-consecrate thy power, —  
And let thy Ritual be the Deeds  
To bless thy Brother more and more.

## DISCOURSES CONCERNING THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

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### III.

#### THE FALLACIES OF SUPERNATURALISM.

THE topic of the last Discourse was Religious Authority. It was shown that though we may accept a Bible, a Church, or a Person as infallible, we do not thereby obtain guarantees for the truth of our Belief: since it is after all the condition of our spiritual faculties, which determines both whether we shall accept and how we shall interpret such a Guide. The possibility of certitude primarily depends on the validity of that Spiritual Constitution whereof these faculties are the more or less adequate voice. If this can be trusted as competent to perceive and recognize truth, if its testimony concerning its own needs is to be relied on, if it be in such healthful accord with the Spiritual Universe that its real demands guarantee the reality of those objects which alone can satisfy them, then indeed we can both positively know and securely believe. But if this light of Nature be darkness, then are we without pilot, compass or helm, and our Knowledge and our Faith are alike a delusion.

Whatsoever then disparages this Spiritual Constitution, whatsoever suppresses, distorts or perverts its natural testimony, in so far forecloses the conditions of Religious Certainty. And the Soul can no more bear true witness concerning itself than the flat-head of the Chinook or the cramped foot of the Chinese girl can give true knowledge of the Human Form. Nor can an authoritative Bible, Church or 'Christ' help the matter at all. On the contrary they increase that artificial compression, wherein the whole disability lies. They are apt to be the very instruments by which it is effectually secured.

It is not meant that the Soul can be essentially *disorganized*. If it could be, there were at once the end of all its authority, and all our assurance. But *demoralized* it can be, and that by the suppression, perversion and distortion of its natural testimony, as above stated.

There are many ways in which this may be done, differing in different forms of belief and stages of social progress. The popular Theology of Christendom has *its* way, also, and this is what I propose to deal with in the present Discourse.

It is betrayed in the current definition of the relation between

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Reason and Faith : a definition wherein Faith is perverted and Reason enslaved.

Human Reason in this Theology is taken in the broadest possible sense, and means the free activity of the human faculties as such. It includes all that the natural human mind is capable of, whether of the intuitive or demonstrative sort. It includes the light that comes out of the natural affections and the natural aspirations. It includes common sense, common conscience or Natural Morality, and such sense of religious need as is conceded to Natural Religion. It is granted that by these activities we reach the axioms of Mathematics and a few moral and religious beliefs. But beyond, it is insisted, there is a region where this our Spiritual Constitution is utterly blind ; where Reason, intuitive or demonstrative, and though speaking in the name of the conscience and the affections, has no place : where truth is no longer a matter of evidence, but must come, if at all, *without* evidence, or even *against* what seems to all these human faculties to be such. And precisely in this region lie the profoundest facts and holiest relations. Here we are saved by *Faith*, which is not one of the natural faculties so much as the surrender of them all ; and which begins just where all rational grounds for believing end.

This inadequacy is systematically assumed in the use of the term "natural" as distinguished from "spiritual." This is what preachers mean by "the inability of unaided Human Reason to reach Religious Truths :"—an expression which conveys an absurdity : since Reason can never be unaided, and the relation of the human mind to all kinds of Truth must be essentially the same.

There follows of course, from these premises, the necessity of a "Supernatural Revelation" to enforce the truth which our natural faculties cannot recognize, and of the blind acceptance thereof in the name of "Faith," as alike our duty and our safety.

Now a "Supernatural Revelation," that is, a revelation under other conditions than those of the natural faculties through which all our experience comes to us, has been already shown to be impossible. So has the blind acceptance of anything, save what the actual state of these faculties, *here charged with impotence*, alone enables them to apprehend and alone serves to guarantee. The bridge, like the great gulf it would span, is therefore illusory. Nevertheless the illusions themselves are to the last degree mischievous, and abolish the self-respect on which our liberty largely depends. This illusory acceptance of a "Supernatural Revelation" is *practically* outward compulsion and the suppression of our inward freedom. It is but another name for the consignment of the Spiritual Constitution to incompe-

tence and even idiocy in spiritual things. And the result is something sadder than a mere illusion.

For once assume that there is a sphere, and that the most vital in human experience, in which rational evidence would be an impertinence, and Truth is positively unrecognizable as Truth, and must be taken upon an authority which forbids inquiry, while the Reason has no function but to suffer shame, — and the step is almost inevitable to that fatuity which makes Religion to consist in believing the irrational, and a doctrine to be all the more credible for being absurd. Is it then strange that we find Christians vying with each other as well as with Jews and "Heathens," in ascribing cruelty, folly, and caprice to the God in whom they are longing to find rest : that they call Him Allwise and Allgood, and yet believe Him to have appointed Labor and Death in wrath, twin curses, drawn swords waving men off from a lost Eden ; to have doomed a part of His children as yet existent only in His purpose, to everlasting wo ; to have punished all men for the sin of one, and then a Sinless One for the crimes of all : — that they believe the Spirit in whom we live and move dwells apart from the Order of Nature, entering it only to violate the laws on which all our reasoning is founded and all our peace depends ? All this comes legitimately from their doctrine that the natural constitution of the Soul is incapable of reaching Religious Truth. If looking through its eyes at this sphere of Thought, they are bound to see wrong, then of course that belief which most perfectly contradicts what they would *naturally* see, must for that very reason be regarded as true. Hence Tertullian's "*I believe because it is impossible.*" Hence the aphorism of Sir Thomas Browne : — "*There are not impossibilities enough in Religion for an active faith.*" With what kind of a Spiritual Constitution did these men suppose God had endowed them ?

"A Christian," said Lord Bacon, "is one who believes three to be one, and one to be three ; a Father not to be older than his Son ; a Son to be equal with his Father, and One proceeding from both to be equal with both ; a virgin to be mother of a son, and that very son to be her Maker." And elsewhere : — "*The more incredible and absurd any divine mystery is, the more do we honor God in believing it, and so much the nobler the victory of faith.*"

"This," cries Dr. Manton, "is the great mystery : Three and One, One and Three : we cannot comprehend it and therefore must admire it. O most luminous darkness ! They were the more Three because One, and the more One because Three ! Were there nothing to draw us to desire to be dissolved but this, it were enough !" Most assuredly so ; if this is the state to which faith has reduced the moral and intel-

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lectual nature, we may well admit that the sooner it is dissolved, the better.

All this has its explanation of course, in widely prevailing experiences : and, is in part, with really devout persons an extravagance of reaction, due to the consciousness of moral dereliction and defect. But the disgust that hurries men into the condemnation of their own nature is like some blind endeavor of the population of a planet to turn it from its orbit. Their indignant levers cannot pry them out of the grand safe tracks which God has laid in His heavens and launch them into the dark Inane ; but the insensate desire and the misapplied effort can sadly pervert and stultify their powers. This humiliation of Reason, making monstrous paradox the test of truth, has served as the leverage of spiritual despotism, giving it power to master the philosopher and the fool alike. Upon this theory of the treacherousness of the spiritual faculties, every sect hastens to find some creed or Church, some infallible record or personage, to save it from the perils of free inquiry, and afford transition to a system of imperatives, where the deceitful function of Evidence shall cease, and the safe rule of Faith begin. The faces of the Protestant and Catholic Theologies are, in this respect, turned much the same way, The Catholic Church knows this, and confidently waits her hour to gather back into her fold the seceders who despise those very faculties which prompted them to secede. One of the acknowledged expositors of Unitarian Theology, in some respects one of the freest, apparently quite unconscious of the step he takes towards the Catholic dogma, asks in all simplicity, if there is "an honest person on earth who would not be grateful for an Infallible Bible." (!) What is there, we say rather, short of utter unbelief in our ability to reach truth through freedom, that could tempt a sincere thinker to ask for immunity from the discipline of testing opinion and the joy of earning conviction ; from the dignity of reaching out further and further in obedience to spiritual needs into God's open world of truth ? Compare the noble words of Lessing :—"Not the truth which one possesses or believes himself to possess, but the honest striving after truth, is what makes the worth of Man. If God should hold all truth inclosed in His right hand, and in His left only the ever active impulse to the pursuit of truth, although with the condition that I should forever err ; and should say to me : Choose ! I should fall with submission upon His left hand, and say : Father, give ! Pure Truth is for Thee alone !"

In comparison with this, what passes with multitudes, under the name of Faith, as the crowning grace of the soul, is mere pusillanimity and desertion of the post of honor. In the name of every intel-

lectual and spiritual dignity let it be affirmed, that if Faith be not evidence, but a substitute for evidence, then there is nothing more fatuous, nothing more pernicious than Faith. It belongs to the class which Bacon calls "Idols of the Theatre," demonizing phantasms, bred of false theories of vision. The freedom and progress of Mankind are not to be barred by these Spectres of the Night.

And what would this Idolatry put in place of the Reason it enslaves, the Intuitions it denies, the Manhood it degrades?

The answer is, "*Supernaturalism.*"

There have been specious and elusive definitions of this watchword of blind belief, by which we must not be misled. We have, for example, nothing to do here with theories like that of the ingenious Dr. Bushnell, who defines the Supernatural substantially as the superphysical, or spiritual as such : and then argues doughtily from this premise against unbelievers in Miracles ; as if they, or at least the class against whom he directs his assaults, had ever denied the Supernatural in that sense of the word. We must not allow the real issue to be set aside by a verbal turn. If Supernaturalism be distinctively nothing else than the belief that man has a spiritual as well as a physical nature, then the word is no sufficient sign or explanation of the warfare which has been raging around it for thirty years between opponents equally persuaded of the fact whereon this author lays so much stress, that Man, as spiritual, is spontaneous and free. The question presented in that word turns upon a difference, not an identity of belief. It is the question of the possibility and reality of Miracles, in the ordinary sense of Miracle : and this implies violation of the spontaneities of spirit and of the laws of matter alike ; violation, in other words of the *stable* conditions of the human will, as well as of those of the human senses : violation of *human nature as such*. And it is in the name of the one class of natural verities as well as in the name of the other that the Antisupernaturalist rejects them. To bring a living soul back into a dead body, or to give sight to one born blind, is a spiritual as well as a physical prodigy : and its supernaturalism, were it possible, would consist in its positive and unmistakable contradiction of the conditions of human nature in its totality. The plough of the discussion cuts even to this depth. If a speculative thinker can bring himself to believe that the human will, through the freedom of its divine spontaneity, is capable of effecting such results, or if he is convinced that the wonder-working of the early Quakers and more recent magnetizers and clairvoyants is similar in kind to that of Jesus, we may or may not accept his opinions : but we respectfully decline to recognize this point of view as genuine Supernaturalism.

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He abolishes the very idea of Miracle on which that doctrine stands ; which may be a very proper thing to do, but assuredly should not be done *in its name* : and he puts in its place a theory in Natural Psychology as explanatory of the New Testament record ; in the discussion of which explanation, while an Antisupernaturalist *may be in some respects* against him, a Supernaturalist *must be in all*. It is unwise to sow misunderstanding by new definitions which it will take a long while to force into currency. It is but fair to the honest believers in Miracle to give them the benefit of their own watchword, and to employ it in the sense which etymology and usage, as well as its relations to general theological questions warrant.

The genuine Supernaturalist means by the word to express his contempt or at least skepticism towards *Human Nature* ; as in highest matters impotent or unreliable. He means by the Supernatural the violation of its essential and structural processes, by exceptional interference from without, made necessary by its unfitness to meet the demands of existence. The "Miracle," whether in the Bible as a whole, or in the Life of Jesus as a whole, or in the special "wonders and signs" recorded of him, is this violation, and it is nothing else. If these miracles were but expressions of certain deeper laws of Human Nature not yet recognized, they would not answer to the definition, nor would they fulfil the one theological purpose of Miracles, namely, to supply the *deficiencies* of Human Nature. If, so far as they are anything at all, they cannot be anything else than this developed Nature, it simply follows that Supernaturalism rests on an impossibility : and the word subtly identified in the general mind with the delusion, must for the present at least share its reproach.

And so the preliminary question as to the possibility of Miracles is not whether any amount of testimony can be sufficient to prove the existence in Man of powers over the physical world beyond his present experience : but whether any amount of testimony ought to convince us that the structural processes of our nature as such have at any time been violated or interfered with. And finally, the question whether certain acts, recorded as miraculous, were ever really performed, is to be settled by two inquiries : first, whether they would certainly fall within the last mentioned category ; — and if so, the Antisupernaturalist would at once deny them : — and second, in case they do not so fall, whether the historical testimony is sufficient, on a full view of the circumstances in which the belief in them has grown up, to prove their reality.

But waiving these considerations as to the theoretical possibility and historical reality of Miracles, we now keep in view simply

their definition as just given, and its bearing on the Foundations of Belief.

The authority of the Supernatural is then the authority of Miracle. And the Miracle supplants all laws of Reason by an overwhelming edict, *which compels implicit belief without inquiry*. This is its purpose in the theological systems, no matter how it be disguised. And the true defender of its authority must in *principle* accept this fearful moral and intellectual chattelhood in its absolute form.

It may be urged that there yet remains one spark of freedom : that there is at least an appeal to rational evidence through the preliminary inquiry as to whether the Miracle was actually performed. But this is by no means the case. Either the book in which it stands recorded is to be accepted as true record without inquiry : or if inquiry be allowed to settle this question, it could not on the theory of miraculous proof be applicable to the *substance of the doctrine which the miracle enforces*. The moment the miracle is accepted as historical fact, that doctrine, whatsoever it be, is to be taken, without regard to its apparent truth or falsity, *upon absolute compulsion*.

For however you may define the miracle, there is no logical relation whatever between the power to perform it and the power to authenticate, or even to *behold*, spiritual realities. If you should to-day behold some one walking on the sea, or changing water into what to all outward appearance was wine, you would unquestionably ask by what law, as yet unknown to you, these things were done. Just as certain is it that you would not regard such extraordinary powers as entitling their possessor to implicit credence in his statements concerning the Will of God or the Duty of Man. The two classes of knowledge have nothing to do with each other. From the days of the Egyptian magicians with whom Moses is related to have contended in wonderworking, down to the latest clairvoyant, who would certainly have been a miraculous person in the ancient time, occult powers have been believed to belong to good and bad persons alike. Does not John speak of "the spirits of devils working miracles," and Jesus of "false prophets whose wonders should deceive the elect?" How long is it indeed since scientific insight escaped the mediæval imputation of being the child of Satan and his 'Black Art?' Science is divinized in these days. Yet do we pretend even now that there is in the nature of things any reason for believing that powers and insights of this recondite sort are confined to men who hold special communion with God?

But I am reminded that on my own admission Miracles proper do



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not come within the class of actions involving merely a profound knowledge of natural laws. Let it then be said further, whatever becomes of "Miracles proper," that nothing beyond such knowledge can possibly become *apparent to the observer* in any wonderful act that lies within the bounds of possibility. Whatever may be claimed as accomplished by the gifted person, it can never be certain that anything more has really come to pass than the use of some unrecognized natural law for the production of impressions, whether of real or imaginary objects. And the fact that this will not explain the restoration to life of one really dead, or the gift of eyes to one born blind, is what makes these reported acts historically incredible. Within their own divinely guarded sphere, the laws of human observation and apprehension are as has been stated. And looking at these laws, we may say that the inherent absurdity in the theological idea of Miracles is that it supposes violations of an order of things which has never yet been fathomed, and which consequently cannot, in any credible case, be proved to have been violated. That which may be only better acquaintance with the forces of nature can be no real evidence of infallible inspiration, or even of superior virtue. Its authority in this respect can only be a blind compulsion.

But let us grant for a moment the credibility of miracles in the sense claimed; the soul given back to the body, the eye implanted in the eyeless socket, the loaves multiplied as bread is *not* multiplied, the wine made as *wine* is not made; manifest contradictions or infringements of the natural order. By what authority is this violation attributed to the immediate act of God, in attestation of a special messenger, rather than to some unknown subordinate Power, of whose moral quality you are ignorant? Why should we not insist that when once you have allowed that the natural order can be violated, you have conceded at least this—that it may itself be no work of God, since it is probable that God would have comprehended the wisest and best way of working, such a way as would not have required violation at all? And if this be so, it is at least possible that any violation of this imperfect order may be due to a being as imperfect as itself, whether good or bad you know not. As evidence of authority from God to reveal His Will, or the substance of spiritual good, the Miracle is therefore valueless. If you believe the teacher on the strength of his miraculous works, you act on compulsion, not on evidence.

And this, in precise accordance with the requirements of the popular theory of Faith. It is simply the suppression of the natural reason, the repudiation of the Spiritual Constitution.

If it be urged that *the moral quality* of the miracle, its power to do good or evil, will prove whether it be of God, and that the miracles of Jesus are distinguished from those of Buddha, Pythagoras, Apollonius and others, in precisely this way, I shall not enter on these questions of fact, but simply observe that this is to strike away the alleged necessity for miracles altogether: since the rational faculty which was able to determine whether *a miracle* were worthy of God, would of course be equally able to determine *without the miracle*, whether a doctrine were worthy of God: which is exactly what the theory of our need of faith in supernatural testimony denies. And so of the notion that we may judge of the origin of the miracle from the moral character of the performer. Moral evidence indeed is not supernatural but natural. In truth it forms no part of the theory, that one should judge morally or spiritually at all. He is blindly to accept. Faith without reason, says Dr. Arnold, "is not properly faith, but mere power worship: and power worship may be devil worship. It is Reason which entertains the Idea of God: an idea essentially made up of Truth and Goodness, no less than of Power."

I repeat it: there is no possible logical connection between the power to perform miracles and the power to authenticate or even to behold spiritual realities. The human mind cannot by any rational process, infer the one from the other. Though one should raise the dead before my eyes, he could not on such grounds claim my respect for his statements on matters relating to the Spirit. And though one rose from the dead, I should not regard him as wiser or holier on that account. A physical resurrection, like that attributed to Jesus, could not even demonstrate the immortality of the Soul. It would only prove that the Soul had not yet been really separated from the body. And if it were a genuine return from another life, it would afford no proof that *in that other life* death shall not overtake the soul at last. Assurance of Immortality even as mere endless existence, depends on other considerations than these. Assurance of Eternal Life has nothing whatever to do with them. Never by any possibility can a mere physical or psychological prodigy clear up a spiritual mystery, solve any doubt concerning the nature of righteousness, the facts of duty, the destiny of the Soul. Its appeal is to a lower order of faculties and conceptions, to blind wonder, to slavish fear. The claim of the faculties really concerned in the solution of these momentous questions is absolutely foreclosed. Moral intuition, intellectual vision, natural sense of the becoming, natural confidence in what is noble, just, beautiful, these are all ignored in contempt. The trick of the so called 'Argument from Miracle' is to paralyze the inward

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vision by dilating the bodily eye ; so silencing and stultifying the natural witness of the spirit in the moment when its activity should be bravest, freest, most self-reliant. It declares this activity foolish and impotent, and proceeds to overwhelm the mind by its display of mere inexplicable power. It is thus an outrage on the moral, intellectual, spiritual nature : a gross contempt of the highest Court of Judgment known to the soul. To remand one who is struggling with doubt or longing for light, to the Miracle for relief, is a mockery. What does he gain by its teaching, if he thereby loses faith in the capabilities of his mind, in the reliability of his affections ? My whole soul cries out for a Father, who has made it lovingly and would have me confide in what it teaches, concerning Friendship, Brotherhood, Duty, Immortality. The Miracle says : "No ! all such testimony is mere fancy, natural heart, unaided reason, and the like : but if a man shall rise from the dead, you may believe what *He* says about God." See then how I stand in this exercise of Faith. I have lost respect for the authority of what is tenderest and manliest in my nature. I have gained a doctrine taken on outward compulsion, unrelated to my moral or affectional nature, the symbol henceforth not of my freedom, but of my bondage. Is not this to cry out for bread and be fed with stones ? Shall we ask for conviction and be answered with coercion — for self-respect and be remanded to self-contempt — for proofs of eternal law and be overwhelmed with evidences of universal instability and caprice ?

It is indeed *impossible* to take any noble or inspiring belief, any Truth of vital moment, on the authority of miracle, or of any other so-called aid to human reason. Only dogmas which contradict reason and outrage humanity can be accepted in the inert and comatose moral condition in which this illusion reigns. Whatever men may think about the processes of their own experience, it is really on the testimony of their own live hearts and minds that they believe in God as a Father, in Justice, in Liberty, in Immortal Life. It is for the monstrosities and pusillanimities in their creeds that they fall back on Miracles. Yet efforts are not wanting to make it seem otherwise, even on the part of sects professedly most liberal towards the rights of the Reason and the Affections. Traditions of supernaturalism hang about them, and override the spiritual instincts, often in a very startling way. We must remember in noting these that men do themselves poor justice in their dogmatic beliefs, and that the worst of such beliefs are generally important as signs of dangerous tendencies, rather than as measures of the real inward life of their confessors.

Here is an instance. I quote a Unitarian writer of eminence

already referred to. "The sole condition on which the Bible increases our knowledge or enlarges our faith, or shows us our duties, or ministers to our sorrows, or draws our spirits to the hope of Heaven, is that we do heartily assent to its miraculous character and contents. If this supernatural element be extracted from the Bible, not a leaf in it would hold together, and the effect would be like taking out the heart, arteries, veins and bloodvessels of a human body!"

To how frightful a moral idiocy would this reduce the spiritual nature, to which all that is good in the Bible must appeal? There is then nothing within us which responds to the Beatitudes or the Parable of the Prodigal: and the sole condition on which these can help us is that we believe water was turned into wine or a man raised from the dead! According to this, we have no recognition of heroism or sacrifice, or of the beauty and nobility of eternal truths: no capacity of being encouraged, comforted, inspired by the sight of these or by the record of them in words that bring us as near to sight as words can reach. These, in the Bible, are nothing but as the empty corpse which remains when the heart of a man is taken out and all the channels of the blood effaced! Can the intensest Calvinistic contempt for human nature outrun this confession of moral and spiritual impotence from the bosom of the most advanced "Liberal Christianity?" If this is Faith, it is little to say that one would prefer to take his chance with "unaided Human Reason," and the "natural mind." If this is Faith, then Faith is a phantasmal substitute for Soul.

It is hard to tell whether skepticism or superstition is the more prominent in the attitude of Supernaturalism. It forbids confidence in the testimony of reason, of the moral sense, of the spiritual instincts and aspirations. It is thus essentially *Unbelief*. It enslaves these dignities of the Soul to an absolute sovereignty, of a nature wholly *unrelated to*, as well as uncongenial with their own: and this is the essence of *Superstition*. In the worship of the Miracle, skepticism becomes superstitious, and superstition unbelieving; the two passing into one. And to urge it is to aggravate either of these tendencies that it may chance to address. For as there can be nothing so fitted to render unthinking people superstitious as the enslavement of Reason to physical prodigies, so there is nothing so fitted to make skeptical persons unbelievers in the Religious Sentiment itself, as to pretend that Religious Truth, which they have found incapable of demonstration by the understanding, must rest on a blind faith in Miracle.

The highest Truths *are not* demonstrable by the processes of the understanding. So far the skeptical person is right. He is right

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in maintaining that reasoning will not establish the existence of God, the reality of Duty, the truth of Immortality. We cannot see the how or the wherefore of spiritual existence as He does who is Himself the solution of all mysteries. We cannot understand the divine foundations on which our being rests. What then will you say to the skeptical person, who inquires how it is possible for him to accept what his understanding cannot demonstrate? You will point him to Faith. But in what? You will assure him that there is an authority above reasoning to which you recur to supply its defect. But of what nature? Will it not make all the difference in the world to such a person whether the authority you present be a positive form of evidence or the negation and condemnation of evidence: whether it be a faculty of his Spiritual Constitution as legitimate within its own sphere as reasoning in a lower one, in short, a part of Reason itself,—or a force *outside* his spiritual nature, coming down upon it as the death of its freedom and the blight of its rationality? In the one case you refer him to something he has not yet recognized or appreciated in the intellectual organization which he honors so jealously: in the other you flaunt in his face a despotism he can in nowise submit to, and call it Religious Faith. In the one case you offer Faith as “evidence of things unseen,” in the other as a *substitute* for evidence. In the one you show him his own inmost belief behind his imagined unbelief; in the other you back the imaginary unbelief with a fresh sense of outraged self-respect. In the one case you may save him from this merely speculative unbelief: in the other you assuredly plunge him into deeper abysses thereof, and shut out the chance of his appreciating the Religious Sentiment by casting reproach on its very name.

Nor is this true only of the excessively skeptical person. The resort to the Miracle, in despair of natural evidence for the eternal verities of Spiritual Life, is *absolutely* to drift without rudder or sail. It is better to drop anchor where we are. If I have no inspired guide in my spiritual organization, no genuine eyewitness face to face with these verities which my understanding cannot fathom, if beliefs so essential are promised only to an abandonment of self-respect which would commend the wildest paradox as well,—then will I fall back manfully on the dim conjecture and the sorrowful doubt. Here at least I shall abide by the faculties that constitute my intellectual sanity. I will learn to accept my essential nature for what it is, and come what may, or perish what may, I will at all events confide therein.

But what must be affirmed to skeptical and believing alike, is that such a guide *within* our Nature there must be and is. We summon

all men to Faith—implicit and absolute;—not in miracles, not in authority supernatural or preternatural: but in spiritual intuitions: in spiritual necessities, invincible and divine, as natural as the breath of life.

We proceed then, in the next Discourse, to the Positive Testimony of the Spiritual Nature, as history and experience report it.

But let us note first the Antecedent Probabilities. Is it not reasonable that the more vital needs of man should be provided for in his spiritual structure as fully as the lower instincts and interests? May we trust our senses, may we trust our faculties in business and in common cares; and shall our unfathomable yearnings for assurances of Immortal Life, of the sovereignty of the Right and the Good, have no guarantee of their legitimacy and their satisfaction? Are these consigned over to the mockery of a faith without evidence? Are we likely to have been so maliciously fashioned? Of all suspicions, surely none could be more irrational than this. And furthermore: have we not in our experience something besides processes of logical demonstration and material observation? Have we not also ideas of Perfect Justice, Wisdom, Goodness; ideas of what would befit these, of the kind of human nature these would indubitably create and inspire? We rely on those processes: why not on these ideas? They are as natural, as becoming, surely quite as suitable to educate and ennoble us. Why hold to those and despise these? Shall the senses and the understanding have spheres wherein they may win credence, and these ideas of moral and spiritual fitness be purposeless in us, and imply neither faculty nor sphere? It is disloyal to Reason and the laws of evidence to tolerate the doubt.

The beliefs we have mentioned are the justification and crown of all others. Without them life is a mere stump, an abortive tendency. And surely it is not more truly the necessity of our imperfection to be assured of them by some commanding voice in our nature than it is the necessity of a Perfect God to give that assurance. It is but a paltry answer to put the old grovelling question,—‘Shall the clay ask of the potter, what doest thou?’ That question dishonors the Creator as it stultifies the creature. It is not wisdom to make ourselves idiots in order to find an idiotic God, as He would be who should form souls with needs not fit nor competent to be answered. Dare to say;—if even we would gladly give all noble satisfactions to exalted or becoming desires, shall not He much more who puts that wish into our hearts? Are our affections more considerate, our minds more just than His? And if He so clothe such grass of the field as our lower wants, shall He not much more clothe our real and vital selves?



## The Fallacies of Supernaturalism. 167

"What, my soul ! see thus far and no farther ? when doors great and small

Nine and ninety flew ope at the touch, should the hundredth appall ?

In the least things have faith, yet distrust in the greatest of all ?"

It is no sufficient reply to point to the 'miraculous life' of Jesus as bestowing such assurances once for all. Miracles cannot authenticate doctrine. It is not in the exceptional but in the natural, not in the temporary, local, and individual, but in the immanent, constant, universal, that the proof is needed. *It is nothing less than the justification of Human Nature that can justify God.* The soul is made to live in spiritual elements. It must have natural eyes fitted to behold these, and trustworthy in the beholding. When the well-formed eye distinguishes objects, it does not need any accrediting from sources outside the human organs. It accredits itself. It is in direct relation to the objects. And we are face to face with Life, Death, Immortality, with the Ways of God and the Needs and Duties of Man. He who made these for us, made us for them. Our spiritual eyes must be formed to behold, our spiritual nature to use them ; and we dwell in them as in our proper home. "We see God twice," says Jean Paul, "within, as Eye ; without, as Light." Nothing else can satisfy the conditions of life ; least of all the artificial and imaginary eyes of Miracle.

And equally from the purpose is it to say, that the Spiritual Constitution has become so perverted that it can no longer discern truth from error without 'supernatural' aid. Most assuredly, if there is no guarantee without this, there can be none with it. For this can give us no new faculty : nor is anything gained by its appeal to an unreliable eye or ear, to an incapable organism. But the statement must be rejected. The premiss must be untrue. Human Nature, by perpetual divine laws, protects itself. We may blunder and we may sin ; but forever the soul must be *essentially* fitted to the truths it must live by, and capable of discerning them by due attention, culture and earnest will. Every individual soul must partake of this substantial sanity of universal human nature ; and the light unceasingly falls into ways prepared for it from the beginning. Our spiritual constitution is still for us the Voice of God, nor can we hear, nor need we desire any other.

"Is the lightning enfeebled or dimmed, because for thousands of years it has blended with the tarnish of earth ? Or the light which has so long travelled in the chambers of our sickly air, and searched the haunts of impurity—is that less pure than it was in the first Chapter of Genesis ? And that more holy Light of Truth, written from the creation on the tablets of man's heart, which was never im-

prisoned within any Hebrew or Greek, but has ranged forever through court and camp, and deserts and cities, — the original lesson of justice to man and piety to God — has that become tainted by intercourse with flesh? Or has it become impossible to decipher because the very heart whereon it is inscribed is so often blotted with falsehood?"

No! the Lawgivers may break their stone tablets in despair: but God breaks not the moulds in which He has cast the immortal Soul. The power of discerning Religious Truth, by whatsoever name it be called, must ever be essentially unharmed. It may be crippled by false systems and creeds: the fears and follies of ages may have so worked in the blood that men hesitate to trust their own spiritual senses, dare not even go down to their true testimony at all. These may lie dormant through neglect. Nor can the highest, clearest vision be given outright and immediately: because it is the condition of all valuable possession whatever that we should pay the price therefor, and this condition can by no means be violated in that which is most valuable of all possessions possible to man: *self-knowledge and spiritual growth*. The organs are capable of testifying only according to their condition, and stage of culture. But the organs are adequate, divine, immortal, unfathomable. And in respect for them, and free brave culture of them, lies the path of Religion as well as of Science. No contempt for them has ever saved men from error. No honor to them will lead men permanently astray from truth. No supernatural Bible, nor Miracle, nor Person has ever delivered men from fallibility, as the follies and superstitions of their creeds, Christian and other, make amply manifest. Nor shall we ever attain that infallibility of which the creeds are forever declaiming, except as the certitude of these organs in all needful knowledge; and this, in just so far as by devoutness of belief, by pureness of living, and by expansion of mind and heart and conscience to the light and warmth of advancing knowledge, we fit them to become, as they are meant to be, and ever tend to be, the Revelation of God.

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#### LOVE'S TRANSLATION.

Whate'er thou lovest, man, that too become thou must:  
God — if thou lovest God; Dust — if thou lovest dust.

#### HOW TO BECOME IMMORTAL.

Become substantial, man, for when the world shall die,  
All substance will abide, but accident shall fly. — *Angelus Silesius*.

## THE SKEPTIC.\*

BY M. D. CONWAY.

PHILIP findeth Nathaniel and saith unto him : " We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write — Jesus of Nazareth the son of Joseph." And Nathaniel said unto him, " Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth ? " Philip saith unto him, " Come and see." . . . Jesus saw Nathaniel coming to him, and saith of him, " Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile."

THERE is one class of persons in the World who have never had justice done them. I mean the Skeptics. When a person is spoken of as a skeptic, you can see a thrill pass over those present, as if they dreamt of a serpent ; and a mournful silence follows every earnest avowal of doubt. And yet it would seem, on investigation, that we have no positive reason for the traditional idea that causes this shudder. Each one of us doubts many times a day ; and it is by continually testing things by doubts that we come to correct conclusions in practical affairs. But where the same test is carried into the high matters of the Soul, where it would seem we should be most careful to carry it, we give up the well-tried rule ; and when a person is so scrupulous as to entitle him to the name of *skeptic*, we are shocked. Yet it is a state of mind that is usually involved in temperament, and may be traced in the blood to your descent from skeptical or credulous races and families. " The shapings of our heavens," says Charles Lamb, " are the modifications of our constitutions, and Mr. Greatheart or Mr. Feeblemind is born in every one of us."

We see the differences every day. One man will weep in secret that he cannot believe the Incarnation or the miracles ; another will swallow all mysteries, and only regret he has n't more. One poor saint will grope through the world, melancholy, doubting if he is regenerate, or if he pleases God ; another is perfectly assured that he is of the elect, that he is God's darling, and gives himself no more trouble about it.

Which of these is learning the lesson of this Universe best ? Which is the truly humble and surrendered soul ? Let that be answered by our first deeper glance at the circumstance of this our mysterious life, where we find ourselves as in mid-ocean, with neither shore in sight, — for who can more than dream of the source of the spirit before it entered his body, or of the land whither we are borne by each moment, as by a wave ?

The motto of the wise old Gascon, Montaigne, was, *Que sçais-je ?* What know I for certain ? Modern Philosophy, inquiring into every sphere of science, finds that the uncertainty of our knowledge is the pressing question. While man is but a bundle of senses, he never doubts ; Reason is then in its lowest state. But he is presently weaned, as it were, from Nature. And the first separation is the discovery that the senses are at fault in some instances, and therefore are not infallible. The child at play, putting a stick in the water, is astonished to see it broken at the point where

\* From "Tracts for to-day." Published in 1858.

it touches the water ; but still more amazed is he to find, on taking it out, that it is unbroken. His senses have deceived him. This is his first lesson in the Law of the Refraction of Light. The Man, a child of larger growth, sees that the Earth is flat ; and when he calls in the mountain, hears that some one answers ; but presently is astonished to find that he sees a small mast at sea before he sees the hull ; and on searching for the sound that answered his call, discovers no one. Here are the first intimations of Perspective, and of the Laws of Acoustics, which explain the Echo as no longer an invisible nymph. You see that *real* knowledge begins by bringing the senses into doubt. Its progress is by a perpetual engendering of doubts, by which one experimenter is led to test the conclusion of the one who preceded him, and perhaps find his position untrue.

What is certain ? In natural science, men of equal genius have theories of the stratification of the earth, the earliest appearance of man, etc., which neutralize each other. Historians are just as much at variance. Caesar's Wars are questioned as being much more insignificant than was supposed, and much reduced in number. Homer is no more the conceded author of *Iliad* ; and it requires hundreds of learned volumes to show that Orpheus ever existed.

If there was anything we might have fixed on as certain, it might have been once the existence of matter and our own persons. But we are now in the midst of a most heated controversy on this very subject. Lord Brougham has said, "He who has never doubted that he existed, may be sure that he has no aptness for metaphysical inquiries." Whether our senses are to be believed, and whether we should give more certainty or solidity to their objects, than we do to the dreams we have—of which we are equally certain while dreaming. And dreams are not wilder than many things that men testify to having seen : men raised to life, ascending to heaven ; health produced by touching the bones of saints ; cities let down from the heavens. Pious, unquestionable men having united in scores to testify these things. We are familiar with the sincerest testimonies to miracles the most astounding in our own day, by persons who have no more interest to deceive than the evangelists. How far shall we believe men ? What shall we believe ? Our own senses ?—they deceive us often ; if you believe them, you would think two stars close together, which were millions of miles apart. Our own Reason ? All of us have given up something we once thought reasonable—why so infallible now ?

Who then is the skeptic but he who holds the balances with unflinching, though human hand ; who believes that much may be said on all sides, and will not be rash or partial in allowing one to be heard to exclusion of the rest ? He is indeed the true ideal man. The finest elements of Nature, the clearest of flame, the finest clay, the lightest air, seem to combine in his composition. As was declared of one in the old Bible, he is as the eyes of the Lord, which run throughout the whole earth. He sees many sides of things where men generally say, "Sit down, eat, and ask no questions." He is the man who comes into the world to consider, *συντείνειν*. For the

word skeptic, however much we shudder at it, really means the lofty character I have indicated. The Greek word from which it is derived is *anemvovai*, literally, *I shade my eyes to look steadily at something*. And a skeptic is one who would shade his eyes of all but the light necessary for seeing — would divest himself of all self-interest — would dismiss passion, and steadily examine all that comes to demand his acquiescence. These are the men in all time, who, by earnestly pressing established positions, detect their fallacies, if they have them, make them more certain, if they have them not. The laws of Gravity, Circulation of the Blood, Fluxions, Motions of the Earth, came by skeptics. And those who are not skeptics, have been those who in every age of the world have abused, scourged, burned, crucified those who, by finding these new laws, brought the old order into doubt on which they had fastened themselves as parasites.

But men ask, Are we not warned against Doubt in the Scriptures? Did not Jesus, as he reached forward his hand to sinking Peter, cry, "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Did he not tell them that if they should have faith and doubt not, they should remove mountains? And there is a phrase coined up by translators and Churches as a sort of bullet for skeptics, taken from Paul, as is said, "Whoso doubteth is damned." But with regard to the few phrases where Jesus is said to have rebuked doubt, it is to be observed that the word does not refer to doubt as we mean it, but *hesitation to do what you are already certain of as right*. The word used is *ediorasas*, and means that kind of doubt which all will unite in reproving; that which stands still before known duty. But Paul says, *Whoso doubteth is damned — if he eat*. (The word does not mean *damned*, but, *is judged*.) The amount of this and the whole of *Rom. 14*, is this: in regard to the question asked him, whether Christians could eat anything without respect to Jewish prohibitions on certain kinds of flesh, he says: Eat what you will. But if you find eating certain things incites weaker brothers to real excesses, you had best abstain. But if you *doubt* whether you may not be doing wrong, you commit a sin, — for doing anything you are not sure is innocent. It is the same as Cicero's maxim: What a man doubteth to do, that he should shun. On the contrary, it was Paul who called Festus "most noble," in the very moment in which he had declared that he doubted on all those things of which he heard Paul preach!

And I wish now to call to your attention *Christ's treatment of a skeptic*. For the little we know of Nathaniel, which is that I have read you in the text, indicates him as a skeptic. And there is something in this brief history, and especially Christ's singular and earnest commendation of him, which excites a desire to know all we can of him.

Those among the Jews who were really religious, as the studious and wise in all nations, were in the habit of going alone to think and read. The hypocritical loved, as we find elsewhere, to pray, standing in the synagogues and street-corners. It is thus a matter of interest that Nathaniel was found by Philip under a fig-tree, a kind which abounded a short distance from the city. It was there that an eye rested on him that he knew not of; one that could never see this retired meditation without deep interest. It was the

eye of Jesus. He also had gone from the busy haunts of men, and doubtless had seen him, when his own spirit was burdened with a world's Evangel, and he would fain commune alone with his Father. So when Jesus was asked by Nathaniel, "Whence knowest thou me?" he said, "When thou wast under the fig-tree, before Philip called thee, I saw thee." . . . There is something here left to the imagination to supply. For the bare fact of Christ's having seen him under the fig-tree can scarcely account for the great emotion with which he instantly exclaimed, *Rabbi, thou art the son of God, the King of Israel*. Some have thought that this arose from Christ's having supernaturally seen him under the tree; and the disciples may have so understood it. But, though I shall not oppose those who find this to be the best element discoverable here, I will only say that I think otherwise. I believe that there was something known to Jesus and Nathaniel alone, relative to his being in that seclusion. Men do not ordinarily leave the city for solitude and thought. Some earnest emotion there was which led this soul away from the shallowness of the city and the hypocrisy of the Temple, — some knowledge of the Father which seeth in secret, it implied, which at once riveted the attention of Jesus. We know not what earnest prayer, that the Messiah might come to redeem the people, went from Nathaniel's heart. We know not what immortal tears were wept in that retreat over the woes and sins of his nation and himself. But we do know, that it was in the mind of Jesus to compare this favorably with the apathy and evil which he everywhere saw: *here*, at least, was no hollow pretense, but real fervor and feeling. And now as he was selecting his disciples, he probably sent Philip to the place where he had seen this good man. For the record says, Philip *findeth* Nathaniel, as if he had been seeking him. And when he saw Nathaniel coming he said, *Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile*. As if he should have said: "There are in the city thousands of Israelites by circumcision; children of Abraham by the mint-tithe and cumin process. Here is one *indeed*; not outwardly so much as they who are in the Temple, — but in reality, because within him is none of their hypocrisy or guile."

And yet, this man of such earnestness and beautiful simplicity, who was declared by Jesus without guile, *was a skeptic*. When Philip found him under the tree he cried with entire confidence, — "We have found him, of whom Moses in the Law, and the Prophets, did write, — Jesus of Nazareth, Joseph's Son." But he finds no ready belief. The incredulous answer is, "*Can any good come out of Nazareth?*" That city had become proverbial for the degradation and sinfulness of its inhabitants; and Nathaniel had all the reason to doubt which we should have, if told that the Christ had come a second time at Paris or Rome. We must wait to see much evidence first: for we have known from them much evil and little good.

Though incredulous, Nathaniel, as is every soul worthy the name of skeptic, was ready to be convinced, was ready to go to any pains to find out the truth. It is for the scoffer, the infidel to refuse to examine and believe the truth; not so the skeptic. He stands to try the case. And he alone is the true man who will neither believe or disbelieve without considering.



So when Philip, in answer to his doubt, says, *Come and see*, we find him immediately leaving his retreat and following. When Jesus saw him coming and said of him, Behold an Israelite indeed in whom is no guile,—“After this,” one might say, “Nathaniel should have believed.” But faith in the Messiah was something more to such a man than the acceptance of commendation. He could not yet give him the high veneration and simple faith which alone were, he felt, worthy his own soul and the *true* Christ. He asks still, “Whence knowest thou me?” But when Jesus told him that he had judged him thus from the devotional scene under the fig-tree, and he felt that he who professed to be the Messiah, was one who judged men, not by seeming or usual standards, and that he esteemed him a true Israelite not because of the Law or Circumcision, but because he went alone and was guileless,—he felt that the true man had come; and Jesus and Nathaniel met as eternal friends,—met, by divine necessity as atom meets atom; and he found in Jesus a true friend, because, in the best sense, a *tried* friend; and Jesus found in this doubting Israelite one who never deserted him, who left all and followed him, who was with the last who saw him on the Earth!

*Rabbi! thou ART the Son of God, the King of Israel!* Ah, my brothers, the man who has never gone through the tears and anxieties of doubt, who has not been led to wander alone, thoughtful and inquiring, knows not the thrill of joy with which any high certainty bursts upon an earnest spirit! He alone knows the real joy of home and fatherland who has long been separated by land and sea,—who has past through storms, perils, fear. Ye who have not felt these know not the full magic that lies in the sacred threshold of home. All joy needs sorrow for its background; all belief needs doubt.

I know when the word skeptic is mentioned, vague images of dread arise as spectres in the mind. Men think of such names as Rousseau, Voltaire, Hume. And in nothing have the vulgarity of the pulpit and the ignorance of the crowd been more displayed, than in holding up these as the types of skepticism. These men were not skeptics: at least, that was not their real and prominent trait. Rousseau had really a lack of faith—not alone in theological dogmas, but in virtue. His philosophy is of man,—*to enjoy*; of woman,—*to please*. But the skeptic must have faith in virtue and God; and his doubt is only of those things wherein men say that God and Virtue inhere. If he gives up the objects of reverence, he does not give up reverence itself; and his Love endures, when the temples in which it worshiped have one by one crumbled, as investigation has gone on. Nathaniel does not inquire, mark you, *Can there be any good?*—but, *Can any good come out of Nazareth?* It is not the good he doubts, but only the Nazareth.

And the skeptic's idea is not that of Voltaire. The one is an anxious search for truth—the other, scoffing and *persiflage*. How different was the spirit of Voltaire when he said, as some one spake of Jesus, “*I pray you let me never hear that man's name again,*”—from the eagerness with which Nathaniel obeyed the request of Philip, *Come and see*; and when convinced, was ready to leave all and follow him.

Nor is it the skepticism of Hume which we commend. He was, however, far nobler than the rest, and his brilliant culture and excellence of character we can all admire. Yet Hume made doubt the object, to be certain of nothing, the highest condition, of mind. But the true skeptic only accepts doubt as the means whereby he is ever climbing from doubt to greater and more beautiful certainty.

When will the world learn that it is only strong faith which can make *skeptics*. When men doubt, and suffer and die for their doubt, as they have done over and again, surely this would seem to require some faith. There is more faith even in religious error, than in the truest of inherited creeds. For none are so little in peril of thinking erroneously, as those who never think at all; and no one will ever be a religious skeptic, who has not enough faith and interest in the subject to search into it, and see that there *are* doubts connected with it, as with everything under Heaven; no one who would be unwilling to spend his life, if need be, in conflict with the hard ore, simply from the higher value he places on the pure gold it holds.

After all, skepticism is only the garment of faith. The great skeptic is always the great believer. And he who has a faith which absorbs his nature, which fills his mind and life, as the sap in the tree fills the smallest veins of ten thousand leaves, he, I say, having this faith, can only speak it out in a series of skepticisms and paradoxes. When one states the deepest thing he feels on a subject in any company, there is always an ominous silence, which hints that your faith has clothed itself in perilous language.

After the timidity that is inspired in some minds toward bravely encountering the highest questionings, arising from the idea of its reprobation by Scripture, and by Jesus; then, from associating therewith certain reprehensible characters;—spectre third rises in a horror at certain names. The Goddess Yoganidra, whom the Orientalists believed in as the illusory and beguiling power of Vishnu, in modern times has worked in the power of names, which are made to serve for facts, which they are not, and, except by analysis, often misrepresent. Such names as Skeptic, Heretic, Free-thinker, Latitudinarian, have been hung up as scarecrows in the Lord's vineyard. Many have been frightened thereby from the richest fruits of thought and experience; even as some ancient tribes knew nothing of fruits of the nut kind, or of shell-fish, thinking them altogether as hard and solid as their shells. But even these names, when divested of cant meanings, contain rich kernels. What does Latitudinarian mean? Why, one whose sentiments are broad and liberal: who will not bind to any dogmas of his own the salvation or excellence of others; and will admit the possibility that he may omit seeing one side of the sphere, while he looks at the other.

Skeptic means, as we have seen, *one who considers*; and there is no more terrible satire on what the Churches have given men to believe, than the fact that the word skeptic has come to be almost synonymous with infidel; that is, *considering* these dogmas is the sure way to reject them!

The same may be said of the word *heretic*. It is simply *argued*, to choose; and signifies one whose own reason and conscience, and not those of an-

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other man or set of men, have decided what he shall or shall not believe. And that this word meaning *to choose*, should popularly mean an unbeliever, simply states with unconscious honesty, that men who have the choosing of their own faith, that is heretics, are rarely known to choose orthodoxy.

And yet Churches are found to blaspheme God in his construction of the necessary functions of the human mind, and to insult the noblest part of man, by circulating tracts entitled, Confessions of a Skeptic, Freethinker's Death-bed, and the like trash!

I will take you to the death-bed of the greatest freethinker who ever trod the earth. It is a hard, severe one, and there is much agony on it. A terrible freethinker's end, you may say! It is only about eighteen centuries back. That death-bed is the cross—that freethinker is Jesus. Never before had a spirit of doubt been let loose with such resistless power on this earth. His doubts led him to the doctors' feet at first, where his parents found him inquiring of them in the Temple: they led him to the wilderness, to the cold mountain and the midnight air. He brought all the existing order into doubt. Pharisee and Scribe, Temple-service and Palace, Church and State bear witness that a fearful questioning of all things is at hand. Every drop of his blood is paid for free thought. Every wound in his body, as we see it there, pleads in silent eloquence that men should be large and free, and unbelievers of all untruth; that the soul should plant itself firmly on its own instincts, and hesitate forever ere it sanction what may be false, knowing that every falsehood injures somewhere! Around that freethinker's death-bed, the voices of the darkness, agony and death, cry out to Christian souls, "Be freethinkers! If you must be so, with the only reward a crown of thorns, a cross your last bed, a mother's powerless tears at your feet your only sympathy, still, be thinkers and be free!"

What love of such a being as this is worthy either of him or the grandeur of the Soul? Is the love of a slave, who fears? Is a blind, unreasoning, and therefore undoubting, acceptance a fit worship to him who died for spiritual liberation?

Thou brave young man! to whom faculties are given to be the germs of other faculties that shall forever aspire to the Infinite Light,—cherish every doubt that comes of simplicity and truth! As the little polypus presently shows on it a dot, which draws to itself strength until it expands into another organized animal, so the doubt that arises is only the germ of some higher Truth that God would unlock from thy faculties. *Cherish every doubt!* To quarrel with these convulsive throes of the mind whereby new truths enter, would be to censure the fiery seethings at the heart of the world, which presently cast up through the boiling sea some fair island firm to the step of man. For there is nothing solid that was not once fluid, nor stable which was not doubted and tried. And Skepticism is the only path to a noble certainty. "He" says Lord Bacon, "who will commence with certainties will end with doubts, but he who is content to commence with doubts may arrive at certainties."

I know that I invite you to much unrest of mind, to some sleepless nights, perhaps. But who would evade the Eternal Laws and say to the Spirit of

Life, "Pass on! animate the world,—kindle every star; let the great Heart beat from ocean to ocean; let the power fill full every trunk, branch, twig, leaf, vein of Nature—but leave me alone to sleep! Let none of the divine currents fill me, thrill me!"

For you can write the entire history and secret of this Universe on the smallest leaf of the forest. It is *Motion and Rest*. Rest, the sleep; motion, the dream: Rest, the Economic life; Motion, its Poetry. Nature lies as the enchanted Princess in the fairy tale; Motion is the Prince who unchains her spell and restores her scepter and palace.

And these forces of the World, Motion and Rest, enter the spiritual Life as Doubt and Certainty: the twin sisters of the inward world.

For there is nothing certain save through doubt of its certainty; nothing doubtful except by the greater certainty of that which brings it into doubt. And men are ever climbing from certainty to doubt and on to certainty again,—as men go to war for a more stable peace.

Let us see that we do not too much love Rest or Certainty! The wisdom that cometh from above, saith the Book, is first pure, then peaceable. The love of the peace that certainty invites to, amid as much evil and ignorance as are in this world, is the love of death.\* So are we told that those who are in regions too cold for life, desire nothing so much as to sleep, and that sleep is death.

But let us on the other hand not love doubt as an end, but as a means.

This unresting life of the Inquiring soul is not fair and good in itself, but as prophesy of a higher Rest. It is thus with what we call the beauty of motion. Motion is not the element of beauty,—*but in the motion we have a succession of attitudes and rests*. The gazelle leaping over the crags presents a series of beautiful pauses. Of any one of them we should soon weary; but each movement promises a position more full of beauty than the last. And we know that the grand and noble element in the doubts of a Human Soul in its endeavors after the Highest, is the promise it gives of the attainment of Rest after Rest, upon Truth after Truth,—all to be won, *not given!*

There is beneath, a great sea of darkness, but above, a greater sea of Light flowing forever downward—'all-conquering Light! And into every soul some ray of the God enters, enough to warm it with love, to purify, amidst all doubts. It is certain that enough is known for a good life. Meantime that one little ray that yet dispels not the gloom, prophesies to us the perfect day; for the path of the Just is as the sun which shineth brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

\* O my brothers, across these quicksands of doubt lies the strong shore of Faith; let us press on! And to thy darkest hour the vision of our earnest Christ shall surely come. Lo! over the centuries his hand is outstretched, his lips move to-day: *Courage, doubting heart, whilst thou wast yet under the fig-tree,—there in thy secret doubt and sorrow,—I saw thee: struggle on, if need be, a year, a thousand years: only be without guile, and on this formless void of Doubt the moving spirit shall bring the Eden of a perfect knowledge!*

## IDEALS.

ANGELS of Growth, of old in that surprise  
Of your first vision, wild and sweet,  
I poured in passionate sighs  
My wish unwise  
That ye descend my heart to meet,—  
My heart so slow to rise!

Now thus I pray: Angelic be to hold  
In heaven your shining poise afar,  
And to my wishes bold,  
Reply with cold,  
Sweet invitation, like a star  
Fixed in the heavens old.

Did ye descend, what were ye more than I?  
Is't not by this ye are divine,  
That, native to the sky,  
Ye cannot hie  
Downward, and give low hearts the wine  
That should reward the high?

Weak, yet, in weakness I no more complain  
Of your abiding in your places;  
Oh still, howe'er my pain  
Wild prayers may rain,  
Keep pure on high the perfect graces,  
That stooping could but stain.

Not to content our lowness, but to lure  
And lift us to your angelhood,  
Do your surprises pure,  
Dawn far and sure  
Above the tumult of young blood,  
And starlike there endure.

Wait there, wait and invite me while I climb,  
For see, I come!—but slow, but slow!  
Yet ever as your chime,  
Soft and sublime,  
Lifts at my feet, they move, they go  
Up the great stair of time.

D. A. W.

## ENLIGHTENMENTS.

BY JAIRUS.

THE GOSPEL.—The Gospel is the GOOD NEWS. It is the voice which crieth, "*Peace on Earth.*" But it saith also: "*Not as the world giveth.*"

The world says, "Peace at all hazards, on any terms." The Gospel saith, "Peace when 't is won. I will overturn, overturn, overturn! I will remove the diadem and take off the crown until the Idea and the Life come whose right it is to reign. I herald the good news of that peace on earth which shall come as fruit, as harvest, as victory. My reign shall be the prosperous reign of Truth and Freedom!"

The Gospel is uncompromising. It sticketh for the whole Truth, the exact Justice, the perfect Love. Casting out fear it trusteth these for all triumphs.

The Gospel requires the breaking of many old idols. Men hear it unwillingly, and say, "It is *bad news.*"

But knowing whereof it affirms, seeing through the gloomiest night the morning's flush, cheerily it hails the angel:

"Onward speed thy conquering flight,  
Angel onward fly!  
Long has been the reign of night,  
Bring the morning nigh!"

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TO-MORROW.—Victor Hugo writes, "There is only one way of refusing to-morrow; that is to die." Since the world cannot die it must accept to-morrow. It cannot have another *to-day*. It deludes itself continually by calling each new day by the same old name; but that is nothing. What's in a name? The morrow must come with new and better life; else, why not end with to-day? Some people distrust the future unless it will repeat the past. But will such people listen? — *there comes a future that you may make the past, the present, better.* Up then, and be doing. Accept to-morrow — you 've got to!

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KINGSHIP.—The dream of Thomas Carlyle's whole life has been to get the world infected with his idea concerning the "Good King." A certain kind of hero himself, he has ever been the most loyal of worshippers at the shrine of great men. And of late years he would seem to have gone wholly mad with enthusiasm for his great Frederick. 'Ballot boxes' have been the night-mare and bane of his philosophy. 'There can be no good ground out of them. If of every ten men dropping ballots, nine are fools, tell me what you shall get as result for this ballot-boxing?'

But this giant with his kingly conceit, finds at last in Republican America a boxer stout enough for his fist-a-cuffs, and quite able to break his skepti-



cism on the wheels of her progress. There is a rumor that he relents, and that his "American Iliad," which he put into a 'nut shell,' shall one day by himself be recast in different mould, and be of such character and dimensions as can be contained in no shell whatsoever. But however this rumor shall turn out, we may with good grace follow the example of our President at Washington, in the case of the martyr-rebel, John Mitchell, and consent to remember nothing of his 'American Career,' while we think only of the 'loyalty' of his earlier services in the production of many inspiring appeals. No one can read his fine essays on "Heroes and Hero-worship," without detecting the presence of a really earnest and public-spirited man, dealing with the characters of men, who, in one way or another, do command reverence in eminent degree. And there is such proportion of truth running through all his philosophy that it fascinates and charms. We do want to know the value of great men and give them sway. We want to seek them out and place them in power with authority of voice and action. But precisely here comes the difficult question for Mr. Carlyle to answer: How to choose the Good King? For in denying the ballot box he leaves no open door to the throne but that already opened by the 'divine right' of old hereditary Kingship, or that of some successful usurpation. This denial of good sense and honor to the common people sufficient for the *choice*, must likewise be a denial of the good sense and honor necessary for *submission*, whenever, by whatever chance-fortune, the 'Good King' shall seize the government reins. Loyalty to the Highest and Best is a product of Intelligence. The wise Will of obedience comes at least of an understanding heart. So it happens the 'Good King' can sit on his throne in peace and safety, only as PEOPLE can understand 'who is this that cometh in the name of the Lord?' recognize his 'divine right,' and obey.

But is not this equal to a request that he abdicate in favor of the people themselves? Is it not Democracy made, not only Right, but Expedient and Possible? If the people are wise enough to know when they are well provided for and to submit accordingly, are they not wise enough also to *choose*, or to keep on choosing, if peradventure, they find themselves deceived? In this very act of choosing are they educated in Wisdom and Virtue.

The Good King acting loyally his part and doing all for the people — seeing to it that no injustice is wrought in their ranks, that there are none to want, but that order, plenty, peace and happiness abound for all — would indeed, right royally do God's supreme bidding — if, in fact, that were God's bidding.

But I look for other statement than this to unfold the Divine Order and Purpose. I look for that statement which shall explain and vindicate the Kingly wisdom native to the common people, and show that there is a loyalty of the human heart to IDEAS, such as it has never revealed in all its devotion paid to Men.

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT,

PASSED BY CONGRESS, January 31, 1865; RATIFICATION COMPLETED,  
AS BY PROCLAMATION, Dec. 18, 1865.

"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." — *Luke xv: 10.*

SO long as heaven keeps earth in its knowledge it will have joy over a repenting sinner. For the divine purposes, which are invisible, must sympathize with every visible recognition of their fitness and beauty, with every return from human aberration to the path which they prescribe. The Earth is in the harness of supernatural powers; it may not be able to turn and see them as they drive — but its career is safe only upon condition of implicit obedience to the hidden Will.

Every departure from this Will produces difficulty and pain. A careless man cannot violate the regulations of his body without having every case checked off to him as he goes; for he is self-registering in body and in soul. By and by, when the accumulation threatens to paralyze all movement, it announces the fact in a way so unmistakable that the individual must instantly choose between life and death. The little abuses keep their own calculation, and go all the time equipped with their own revenge. But the exhilarating sense of returning health which the body has, or the soul's feeling of a restoration to harmony with its own supernatural laws, is a token of a pleasure shared by the "great mind that o'er us plans." For although nothing can disturb the divine equanimity, nothing can change it to indifference. If the Father cares for the men whom He makes, how much more must He sympathize with His own image when it reflects His purity and truth.

And it seems to me that the invisible worlds must include some provision for apprizing kindred souls of the great moments in which an individual or a country selects honor and regeneration: so that although they may be very far from the details of earth which either vex or thrill, and incapable of personal cognizance and information, some quality of satisfaction, of reassurance, travels to them by the sympathetic cords that keep up truth's intercommunication through the universe. It is not necessary that a mother shall learn the fortunes of her prodigal, but if the invisible air trembles to every vibration, as the visible does, it will be difficult to prevent her from being thrilled at his return to her own innocence which once fed his. Death separates individuals, suspends personal intercourse, and lets no knowledge through; but unless it cuts at the same time the unity of laws, and the sympathy of every part of the universe with its own health and order, it cannot intercept these notices, which come and go unnamed. Else whence this emotion at a great moral victory: and why are we mastered by it if it be not larger than ourselves? The bosom is heaped up by a spring-tide whose first wave rose in the depth of heaven's pleasure; it is the rebound of news which earth telegraphs into the invisible. The persons who once

bore the names of Washington, Adams, Franklin, Channing, Parker, may be far enough off in all their business and intelligence, incapable of transmitting a single hint to us, or of receiving a single item from senates, homes and battle-fields, unless the martyrs of the country passed from prison and victory into their society ; but if when death breaks a heart its patriotism and its longing for righteousness is not all spilled out, nor its memory for the great questions, nor its vital hoping for the great causes, then prodigal America was welcomed by her children who lived and died for her. Winter cannot freeze deep enough to chill vital joy — too many hearts on both sides of death are alive — too many minds organized upon the principles which are the same in all places that infinite space contains.

And all who die with just hearts are detailed upon this secret service — to carry earth's best moments into the company that is all ready with greeting and honor, and to impart the satisfaction, which heaven itself cannot give, that its noblest inmates did not labor on the earth in vain.

Regeneration must always begin with a joy that is proportioned to the shame and the damage which a vicious state produces. The wider the suffering the deeper the triumph. When a man is torn and blackened by his excesses, and a powerful body and a large intelligence are scarred, this power, in returning to the ways of health, fills him with his proper freshness, and when we think he is about to disappear in night, he is a morning star again that sings for joy. When he lets his conscience out of jail, where propensities have kept it, so that it freely walks the great roads of God again, its feeling of harmony is as deep as its previous sense of discord. Though he may never have acknowledged to himself that he had hired himself out to share the husks, and was too proud to accuse himself with entire sincerity, yet his joy at being found is the measure of the Father's joy at finding him. What a confirmation to the truth of such a parable this country gave when, the other morning, it said, "I will arise" — and six and thirty states, torn by shot and shell, blasted by the suffering which their licentiousness engendered, bleeding at a million self-inflicted wounds, brought to death's door in the full flush of intelligence and power, voted at last against death, and arose. I say six and thirty — for the members that have still soundness in them voted for all the members, and bade them all arise and go forth to meet liberation and manhood. Conscience turned the sin out forever. It went, by so many deaths ; it passed out, furiously rending, by so many wounds : the great profligacy which had been for two generations wasting our energies, and subsidizing every nerve to promote its pleasure.

America was the youngest son of the divine providence. His home was a continent which emerged from the sea sooner than all the other land of this planet, as if to mature while history was gaining experience in other lands. Give me the portion of goods that falleth to me, said at length this son, restless with hopes and unfulfilled desires. The Father set off a portion of his living to his latest offspring, who took it and journeyed into a far country, where wasting its substance in riotous complicity with slavish passions, it fell from fortune to fortune, passing to the condition of a servant,

hired to do a master's will ; this youngest child of liberty was sent into the fields to feed that herd which has fattened upon your privileges and grown wanton in your cheap abundance. But liberty starved while tyranny grew fat, till she was fain to fill herself with the husks of offices, compromises, and political advantages which the wily citizen of the world bestowed. How many times has the conscience of liberty complained that in her Father's house there was bread enough, and to spare — but in America she was perishing with hunger. Through how many golden and indignant mouths did the expectation of mankind declare against the husks ; what intuitions of the saving truth have been spurned for the sake of quiet, of comfort, of partizan success ! The conscience of America, for many a year confessed — “ I perish with hunger.” But the people preferred convenience to conscience, and put forward able speakers, who exhausted the resources of statesmanship to make the husks appear to be a superior kind of bread, adapted to a young and growing soul. Is it wonderful that there came a mighty famine in that land ? It will always appear wonderful only to those who think that human measures are more sacred than the laws which God premeditated in eternity before He gave order to the worlds and conscience to man.

Consider the evils which were done by slavery. It does not appear to me that the sufferings of the slaves were the worst of these, or the most noticeable. And if they ever were exaggerated, the argument against slavery is by no means weakened. Even if no sufferings at all existed, and it could be shown that every slave lived at the pinnacle of personal felicity, with every creature comfort, all mental advantages, and as much freedom as he was capable of using, the horrible damage done to this country by slavery remains yet untold. For it was inflicted upon the men and women who bought and sold the slaves, and who have been the incarnation of America for sixty years. The damage was done to the actual, responsible, America, which transacted affairs, held vital relations with the rest of mankind, built churches and filled them with irreligion, passed measures that misrepresented liberty, and whether voting, diplomatizing, teaching or fighting, appeared as the genius of the Western World. A Constitutional Amendment ! What a phrase of spiritual significance ! Slavery hardly appears at all in the written Constitution of the country. A stranger might have read and pronounced it a clean bill of health, which admitted us to free intercourse with the proprieties and purities of a world. It was framed before the mental and moral constitution had begun to yield to the guiltiness which fixed a taint in our blood, until it was necessary that amendment should spring up in the soul of the people before it could be written all over its parchment of liberty. Our political history is a record of the gradual degradation of the popular mind under the influence of slavery. Successive measures that passed in its interest were bulletins of the disease. Let us not recall the sickening list of compromises with our great evil which were baptized, as fast as they appeared, with the name of statesmanship. Consider how deeply involved with this disease the mind and con-

science of the country had become, to be at length in such a condition that the encroachments of the disease appeared to be limitations of it, and the best intellects of America devoted themselves to persuade the people that they could not have a powerful and noble country without giving as much power to slavery as to Freedom. And this, because the sinning members were bound up in one body with the other members: this seemed enough to justify the situation of being accomplices in sin. The leaders of the people, after spending a winter in Washington, exchanging civilities with the temper that always presumed upon them, would return to their constituents with the conviction that the country was in danger, not from the increasing arrogance of its chief iniquity, but from the developing conscience which criticized and opposed it. They lent their fears, and not their reason, to the people. They said to them, "You will have no health or soundness unless you let your sin alone: if you let a sin alone it will never grow — cease to oppose it and it will die out — it was on the point of disappearing when you began to be distressed by it and to raise the accents of alarm." Was ever such philosophy offered to the souls of men: was there ever before such a case of outrage to the law of conscience in the name of Law: did ever the leading minds of a great nation seek so to prostrate its moral sense before Law, which derives all its majesty and stringency from the moral sense when it inspires justice and fitness, and lays broad foundations in the nature of God? It was the deliberate effort of intelligent statesmanship to stifle the voice of God in the heart of the people, by showing that there could be no higher duty and no truer patriotism than to give way before iniquitous demands. How would those eloquent denunciations of the higher law sound to-day over the graves of the men who thought that they had saved their country, when they had renewed the lease of sin and comforted the half-conscious spirit of rebellion! I wait to hear some accomplice of those venal years declare that history has judged these time-serving and eternity-despising efforts — to throw some late laurel of approval, some wild-flower of magnanimous recognition, upon the graves of the men who spoke for conscience and went down to death hated by the people. Let the courage and spiritual faithfulness which tried to secure a great public opinion in favor of righteousness be recognized by a nation with tardy but whole-souled gratitude. And teach to your children the names of the men who died believing that justice brings peace, and crime invites misery and war — those genuine statesmen of America who proposed the golden rule to solve all difficulties, and who, if they could have roused in time a popular conscience in the hearts of twenty million men, would have anticipated treason, by rolling back the sin upon itself, and thrusting back its flattering advances, and tearing its compromises to pieces, and forbidding its agents to occupy one place of trust or of power. Consider how corrupt must have been the blood which went to and fro between the heart and the intelligence of America, when these statesmen of Christ were hated and persecuted for believing in the liberties of America, for prophesying this day, and giving soul, body and estate that it might come speedily. Here is a test of the damage which sla-

very inflicted upon the men and women of the land, that half a million of men must die in battle or rot in prison, before we can all see clearly that conscience was as right then as it is now, as regenerating then as now, as capable then as now of lifting America to her proper dignity. A conscience twenty million strong would have been a Constitutional Amendment, a purgation of the body by nature's sanitary vigour so that God's hand would have withheld the dreadful surgery of war.

Now the tide of life in Maryland flows with Northern teachers of the negro, through the streets of Baltimore, over the bloody tracks of a Massachusetts regiment, past the jail in which Torrey pined and died because he acted upon the conviction that color did not settle Freedom. Now the emancipated slaves in Washington are represented in the Supreme Court not far from the prison in which Captain Drayton lost, by disease and ignominious treatment, the mind which was once strong and clear enough to see what Daniel Webster could not see, that a fugitive slave was a claim upon the Christ in every soul. How many obscure graves there are, honoring the soil of America, of poor men who could not "conquer their prejudices" for humanity, could not overcome their predilection for simple justice between man and man, simple-minded but powerful-hearted, who resisted the infection which rotted away a shapely stem and laid it in the dust. Far away in Florence, her roses each spring blushing all over his grave for pride of him, sleeps the true American, who took precedence of all the statesmen and lawyers of Massachusetts, because his vigorous intellect was fed from the springs of a heart in which love of men lay deep and Christlike. Yes—he knew who Christ was, though he paid little lip-service to his name: but he felt that Christ's conscience was more truly supernatural than all his miracles, more directly inspired by the Father, more suited to the wants of men. And he said what Christ said—render God's things to God: and his sinewy hand held the cup of cold water to the lip of the fugitive, for he was aware that all his scholarship and knowledge was never so faithful and so illustrious as when he was defending these little ones from spurious patriotism. For doing this—for standing precisely where Christ would have stood, to rebuke an adulterous and sinful generation, as he contrasted the higher with the lower law, he was the best hated man in America. But now I remember that on the evening of February 4th, 1864, the Governor of Massachusetts called the intellect and beauty of the Commonwealth to the Music Hall, once filled by Parker's presence and shaken by his manly speech, to hail the passage by Congress of the Amendment which has just been ratified. It was Boston's acknowledgment of the truth of this lover of fugitives and hater of sham statesmen—she pronounced that he was right when all the rest were wrong—she saw the joy of a people, convinced as it slowly waded through a red sea of blood, break forth in the hall where he prophesied the blood and the regeneration. Let the joy grow together and take shape, and become a statue of honor to stand by the side of Beethoven, that the seekers of pleasure and of truth may read there upon its pedestal, the sublime motto of a new America—"Righteousness exalts a nation."



But the noblest recognition which a country can bring to its prophets and its martyrs is not couched in speeches, statues, music, and the loud acclaim of victorious moments. It reaches the dead who suffered for us, when it reaches the living who require our aid. Not a true heart ever broke in the gloomy days which will not heal in the exquisite balm of our acceptance of the duties which regeneration brings. What a flattery will that be, paid to the principles that once were scouted, when we accept their burdens and sacrifices, all the people hastening to atone for past transgression by present effort, to substitute gentle consideration for freedmen in the place of oppressive contempt for slaves, to open for them, as they come from this anvil of war with their fetters all knocked away, every door we guard that leads to human rights — the door of knowledge, the door of religion, the door of political equality, the door of professional advantage, the door of sincere respect, until the whole race shall be added to the nation — to its conscience, to its religious sensibility, to its physical and civil energy. And what revenge, that shall be sweet to saintly hearts, and welcome to the tenderness of the infinite God, as the treasonable states also bring their tardy recognition to the mother whose breast they smote in blindness, when the opening eyes greet the fountains of nourishment again, and remorse hastens to heal every lacerated spot by some dutifulness, some care: the unaccustomed actions creating in them a clean heart, and renewing a right spirit within them, so that there shall be a unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance," — this is the language with which Religion would dignify our hours of rejoicing and confirm our good intentions. A great country is slowly disengaging itself from this death-grapple with its own iniquity; it bleeds and is faint, though the triumph is very clear and strong in the eyes: there are many wounds to tend, many wrongs to right, much misery to repair — waste places to be rebuilt and settled with our choicest things — ignorance to be patiently addressed — ill-feeling to be obliterated. The wilderness must learn to blossom. We must feed and clothe and teach: we must organize a whole social system upon heavenly principles, and, remembering the mistakes of the past, make no compromises with half-way measures, but apply the whole counsel of God to each emergency, to let back no drop of unsound blood into the veins of America.

Let us beware about indulging vain-glorious sentiments, to be elated — to be content with counting the spoils. Slavery is abolished — but the results of slavery still infest the land — the old prejudices retreat slowly even before this day of jubilee; it will take the persistent work of a whole generation, with almost every man and woman in it faithful, to undo our mistakes, although a great war goes before to clear the way. Let us all follow, each with the contribution that expresses best his sincerity, to send living columns of grateful service across the country to search for scars, to hunt down malignity by gentleness, to resist it by political impartiality, to apply in various ways the spirit of the Christmas text that proclaimed peace on earth and good-will to men.

The work before us is enough to make Christians of us all : and we shall pay this debt to God by lives that refuse to be mean and impure so long as such exalted services shall be required. Let us look to our private hearts, to see if we are worthy to be living now, and to be portions of a history such as the finger of providence never yet traced upon the marbles of a world.

Your dead soldiers invite you to this laborious gratitude. You may go over the whole land, anxious to plant your tablets of honor wherever you can find a grave that is tenanted by a soldier, and miss not one of them on either bank of the Mississippi, and the Tennessee, along St. Helen's sound, and thickly scattered around the James ; you may build monuments over the pits at Andersonville and Salisbury, and yet make no return, — nay, you will offend and disgrace these dead men if you draw up a roll of fame and forget to subscribe it with your own self-sacrifice. They died content to fill an unmarked and unhonored grave, provided the surviving brothers would let their names suggest the choicest things. And what are more choice than these ? Duty to the freedmen, duty to the widows and the orphans from the Gulf to the Lakes, duty to the returning prodigals who have eaten the husks of slavery so long.

JOHN WEISS.

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#### ON A FALLEN COMRADE.

THE long and slow procession lags,  
The streets are dressed in red and white,  
The torn and tattered battle-flags  
Go to the Capitol in sight.

Clash all your cymbals, speak, great guns,  
Enchase the city's roaring flood ;  
But still the thought of silent ones,  
Cools down the spring-tide in the blood.

I mark the crowds, I mark the cheers,  
But see not in the ranks *his* form, —  
Not here, not here among *his* peers,  
The spirit of the battle storm.

We little men of little fame,  
Ashamed to show our faces here,  
Beseech thee, Noble Youth, to claim  
The silent tribute of a tear.

O mock not him with foolish praise,  
Nor o'er his bones the tale rehearse  
With flourish of your idle bays,  
Or tombstone of a moral verse.

The brag of youth and health and ease,  
He courted Danger's awful charms,  
And pleased to thunder on the keys  
Of War's dread organ, died in arms.

How well he sleeps upon that shield,  
The glorious shield of native worth;  
His country bore him to the field,  
And Freedom took him from the earth.

*Forefather's Day, Dec. 22.*

JOHN SAVARY.

#### NOTES FROM SCOTLAND.

ROBERTSON, the late eloquent minister of Brighton, said once that the Protestantism of many people and Churches was that they had broken Popery into a thousand fragments and then made each separate fragment into a pope. Is it not true that nearly every one has his Fragment-Pope? Certainly every Community has. In Scotland, where many a poor wretch has suffered the stocks for remembering Easter or Good Friday or some other papal holiday, they have the most exasperated case of Pope known on these Islands. That Pope is the First Day of the Week. He is now carrying on with his rebellious children a fierce warfare. The controversy seems to have sprang up about the running of Sunday trains over the road between Edinburgh and Glasgow. This bit of railroad iron has entered the Scotch Pope's Soul. On this subject the Presbytery of Glasgow has been in almost chronic Session; for in Glasgow they have more drunken people, more illegitimate children, and more rigid Sabbaths than anywhere else in the known world. But lately this Pope received a terrible shock—something in fact, analogous to the withdrawal of French troops from that other at Rome. Dr. Norman M'Leod, — Editor of *Good Words* — the best platform orator in Scotland — Dean of the Chapel Royal — favorite preacher and personal friend of Her Majesty when she is at Balmoral — has been converted into an enemy of the Sabbatarian Pope! He was once sound in the faith, but at one great leap he has become the Champion of the other side, and he made a speech before the Presbytery of Glasgow which dissolved them individually — collectively, it is undissolvable. Dr. M'Leod declared

that so far as Christians are concerned "the Decalogue is abrogated," and that if there be one part thereof more abrogated than another, it is the Fourth Commandment, which not being in itself a moral obligation is not binding on the conscience. He gently hinted that walking, riding, and even dining out on Sunday were not sinful; and he even ventured to ridicule the Sabbatarian Pope by relating the story of a Scotchman who in cutting a ham vigorously came to the bone, when he devoutly gave up the carving knife to an heretical Englishman, observing that he could not venture to divide that on the Lord's day! M'Leod has been joined by George Stewart Burns, the fine pulpit orator of the Glasgow Cathedral, and by a rising young minister, named McQuislen. As the hot-bed of Tetzelsm nourished Lutherism, so it seems that Glasgow—the centre of bigotry—has raised up the strongest array of anti-sabbatarian ministers. It is always so: action and reaction are equal: positive in one end begets negative in the other. What if Scotland should lead off in heresy, as Puritan Boston with its Channings and Parkers did? However, the other party, who have Jamieson, Macduff, and several others whose names I will not give, as they would be as unknown to you as to me—though I have an impression that Shakespeare tells us to "Beware of Macduff," (S. was never sound in theology)—has no idea of surrender, and has passed a resolution inviting sympathetic merchants to withdraw patronage from ungodly railways! One good result to the general public has been secured by this fierce conflict: it has induced Robert Cox, nephew of the late George Combe, and a remarkably austere and thorough man, to explore the Sabbath Question, and to give us in a book of two volumes—"The Literature of the Sabbath Question"—all that is implied in his title. The work, which is considered justly, next to Dr. M'Leod's name and influence, the biggest gun fired in the present controversy, Mr. Cox has been eight years in loading. It contains a notice of every book that has ever been published on the Sabbath Question, and a statement of every important opinion ever offered thereon.

Whilst I am writing on Scotch matters, I may mention that Mr. Carlyle's first act as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University has been very characteristic: he has appointed David Laing to be his assessor in the University Court. Snobbery—for Edinburgh has that as well as other places—winces at this; for Laing is not a fashionable diner-out, nor a wealthy man; but those who have any real reverence for the claims of true and unpretending ability rejoice in it. Careful readers of Carlyle may remember David Laing as the editor of the letters of Baillie the Covenanter, which served Carlyle for the text of one of his Essays. He has since then been the most laborious of Scottish antiquarians, and is at present the Chief Librarian of the Library of writers to the Signet. Carlyle is to give his Inaugural Address next April.

Professor Masson in the course of his abominable Inaugural Address as Professor of English Literature and Rhetoric in the same University, illustrated his negative views of Rhetoric as an art and study by the old Border Ballad of *Kinmont Willie*. That Border worthy, he said, having been en-

trapped by superior numbers by the false Sakeld, has been carried across the Border, as a prisoner to Carlisle Castle, where Lord Scroop threatens to hang him up. But the bold Buccleugh, the Keeper on the Scottish side, resolves on his rescue. So he sets forth with forty march-men, in four bands, of ten men each, taking the road at intervals. The first ten were dressed as hunters, the second ten as warders, the third as masons with ladders, and the last was a ragged band as of "broken men." Having got as far as Debateable Land, whom should they meet but the false Sakeld himself, who had Kinmont Willie as a prisoner. In trying to pass him without suspicion, the hunters, the masons, and the warders, easily invented plausible reasons for crossing the Border, when the Sakeld sternly questioned them. Not so with the last band.

"Where be ye gaun, ye broken men?"  
 Quo' fause Sakeld; 'come tell to me.'  
 Now, Dickie o'Dryhope led that band  
 And the never a word o'lear had he."

That is, Dickie was no rhetorician. Sakeld, getting no reply asks further:

"Why trespass ye on the English side?  
 Raw-footed outlaws stand!' quo' he.  
 The never a word had Dickie to say:  
 But he thrust a lance through Sakeld's bodie."

In short, said Mr. Masson, it is Dickie o' Dryhope, who has no "lear" and no rhetoric, who does the most effective feat of the whole expedition and secures its success. But, he reminded us, though fine or loud talking is not rhetoric, we cannot in the present state of society be Dickies o' Dryhope. We must be preachers, lawyers, physicians, merchants, schoolmasters, and we shall have to use pen and tongue, and shall find our advantage in using them expertly and agreeably. A man must manage his tongue or pen as efficiently as Dickie did his lance, was the impression which the good old story left on the minds of those who heard it.

It is a question whether England could compete with Scotland in the number of original thinkers and inquirers which it has given to the world in modern times, or, indeed, which it has now. "A man is not a horse because he was born in a stable;" and there are many vigorous and distinguished men who are of Scottish blood, and many more who have always lived in England since childhood. Mr. Gladstone's parents (both) and ancestors were Scotch, and the same, I believe, may be said of the late Baron Macaulay. The great names of the last generation — Sir William Hamilton, George Combe, John Wilson, and a half score of others will readily present themselves to the mind. In the present day we have from that land, Carlyle, Sir Charles Lyell, Sir Roderick Murchison, Professor Ramsey, Professors Moir, Blackie, Masson, Dr. Guthrie, George McDonald, Norman M'Leod, James Hannay, the brothers Chambers, all of whom are remarkable for original thought and intellectual energy. The English lit-

erary men are perhaps more trained, more critical, but their supremacy in other respects may be doubted. The *schools* of thought, especially in metaphysics, have in late years come from Scotland; unless indeed Mr. Herbert Spencer's philosophy shall be recognized as a fresh establishment in that direction — a thing not yet decided. The particularly philosophical tendencies of the Scottish mind are shown in its strong alliance with the German mind. It was not an accident that the great German Literature of the modern age was a *terra incognita* to English Scholars until it took the brain of Carlyle for its lecture desk. The Scotch before and around him were given to explorations into that region and helped to produce the great interpreter of the Teutonic mind. And at this day, of the young men who go from these islands to study in German Universities, seventy-five per cent. are said to be Scotch.

There are few parts of the world, however, in which natural intellectual vigour has been so much repressed by religious bigotry as in Scotland. Mr. Buckle's theory of Scotland has daily illustrations. There are original gifts enough in that land to-day to revolutionize thought, but there is no popular welcome for, but on the contrary, much popular fear of, freethought. The Scotch intellect has inherited heavier mortgages on it than that of England. As only apes could be born before the planet had formed a solid pedestal for man, so the world of thought must be drained of old bogs, and the fens of superstition burnt away, before the greatest thinkers can be produced. There being no literary public, in any large sense, as there is about Boston for example, the thinkers are driven to have their 'Noctes Ambrosianæ' to themselves, and can never gain the Antæan fibre which comes by contact with the general mass of men. Hence one finds Scotch thought running in the narrow gauge. The best of Scotchmen will be found vehement in some one or two directions, but weak as a babe in others. Carlyle is the representative man of Scotland, and we all know that his tremendous utterance is the result of some great lake pouring — Niagara-like — through a narrow pass, and over the rock of Scotch bigotry. The English are just as narrow by reason of insularity. May we not hope that in America is to be fulfilled the prophecy that

"The thoughts of men shall widen with the process of the suns."

C.



## BOOK NOTICE.

THE WORKS OF EPICTETUS: A Translation from the Greek, based on that of Elizabeth Carter; by THOMAS WENTWORTH HIGGINSON. Little, Brown & Co. Boston: 1865.

MR. HIGGINSON has here added to his many claims on the public gratitude, an invaluable contribution to meet the moral and spiritual demands of the community. Better service could not be rendered the people than to bring them face to face with those noble Stoics of the Roman Empire, who rescue "heathenism" from unjust contempt, and illustrate the natural capacity of the soul for the loftiest inspirations of piety and the utmost recognition of the Moral Law. For nothing can be more treasonable to democratic principles than a Christianity which claims for itself exclusive ownership, as against the older religions, in any form of heroic and devout manhood. Our American theory rests on the accessibility of the Divine to every soul: on the derivation of all religions from a common root in human nature. It demands that the inspiration of Jesus and Paul shall count but as the pre-eminent virtue of individual citizens in a spiritual republic as wide as Humanity; and every admirable person outside the technical limits of Christianity is its justification, and should be our crown of rejoicing.

Our best friends are bringing us the grasp of these manly hands across the ages: our best disciplines are those which teach us that we have no monopoly of the air and soil needful for the development of such spiritual nerve and sinew.

Christianity and Stoicism were independent currents, holding in solution respectively the finest issues of the Hebrew and Græco-Roman Civilizations. It is *to their junction* that we must mainly ascribe the majestic stream of modern Equity, Ethics and Religion, so far as it is to be explained by historical causes. The gift of the Stoic was a certain manly faith in the capabilities of this life; in the structure of the soul as inviolable and forever adequate: and in the universe as ever in right relation to the right user of its laws. It helped to counteract that morbid sense of hopeless corruption and failure both in the spiritual and material spheres, which at last bowed the Christian Church under the dogma of a Supernatural Atonement.

For this brave hold on Nature in an age when even love and piety were losing faith in it, all later generations are debtors to the Stoics. Their words are tonic and restorative even in the highest stages of human culture. Their self-reliance and self-respect are eminently suited to recal the free citizen from expediciencies and compromises, from petty competitions and subserviencies, from all frivolity and from all despondency, to the self-collected thoughtfulness and faith in ideas which become, and which alone can save him. There was never sterner devotion to principle, never loftier protest against moral indifference, never more steadfast steeling of the soul against the temptations of the senses, never calmer endurance of all earthly

straits, than what many of these pagan Independents practised as well as taught: no clearer statement than theirs of the Eternal Right and Good; theoretically, at least, no wider love of man, no deeper reverence for God. The Stoics infused equity and humanity into Roman jurisprudence. Their central idea was the unity of the race: their prophetic vision a grand republic with God for its ruler, and His Justice for its Law. Nature, material and spiritual, was His "City;" to live according to its true dictates, was to live free and happy, and "all that its seasons brought was fruit."

That Stoicism, while exhorting men to "die as became the divine within them," and requiring no sanction for virtue from the rewards and penalties of another life, has seemed to some Christian historians to prove its inferiority to their own belief. Rather is it a spectacle of human dignity unsurpassed in history; this tribute to the inherent authority and grace of Righteousness. So to take the highest ideals on their own merits, to love the purest virtue for its own nobility alone, is indeed to walk in the perfect liberty of the children of God. If this be not Christian, the worse for our Christianity.

These great Romans should be greeted as the timeliest and most welcome of our guests. Their words should have such praise from us as they never before received from any age or people. For they are an essential part of that *Bible of Bibles* which Democracy demands in the name of Universal Religion; the gathered wisdom of holy men out of all times and all communions, which it will learn to cherish not with slavish book-worship, but with grateful recognition and enduring respect.

It is good to see the excellent version of Marcus Aurelius by Mr. Long followed so speedily by this of Epictetus, which in no respect yields to it as a translation, and will be found in style more attractive to ordinary readers. No competent scholar will hesitate to award very high praise to Mrs. Carter's work. Yet this careful and thorough revision of it has resulted in very great improvement both verbal and essential, of which every page affords examples. If the philosopher be not rightly apprehended by the thoughtful reader, it will not be for lack of a faithful rendering of the records left us by his disciple. Mr. Higginson's preface contains a concise and effective outline of his life and belief, as well as of the literature of the subject.

There is need of a like service to the works of Seneca, known to the American public only in the Abstract of his *Morals and Epistles* by Sir Roger L'Estrange. And when this has been accomplished, it will, we may hope, become a common duty and delight to observe how this divine philosophy, which Seneca himself entitled "the founder of the rights of man," could place on a common level of spiritual aspiration and dignity an Emperor, a Nobleman, and a Slave.

Would we might also recover the writings of those *older* Stoics, Zeno, Cleanthes and Chrysippus; from whom we possess a few fragments, true for all time; and concerning whom we know at least this, that they taught in Greece, previous to the Christian Era, the same principles which we find in their successors of the first and second centuries.

S. J.